

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE 55

NEWSWEEK  
12 October 1981

GERMANY |

## An Exchange of Spies

When Wolfgang Vogel was spotted in a West Berlin café recently, it didn't take a le Carré to know that East Germany's master spy swapper was about to spring another deal. Bonn's porous bureaucracy leaked word that the East Germans had agreed to release 35 imprisoned West German spies and political prisoners and to give exit visas to 3,000 East Germans wishing to join relatives in the West. In return, France, Denmark and South Africa were each to release an East-bloc agent. West Germany would pay \$65.2 million and release at least two spies, including one prize catch—Günter Guillaume, 54, whose unmasking in 1974 brought down the Social Democratic government of Willy Brandt.

The swap that actually unfolded last week was not entirely as advertised; but it was easily Vogel's most flamboyant caper. France, Denmark and South Africa hung onto their Eastern agents for the time being, and the East Germans apparently have released only 20 to 30 Western prisoners. But Bonn went through with its part of the bargain. Late last week, after serving seven and a half years of a thirteen-year sentence for treason, the chubby Guillaume, wearing a green parka, was placed in a delivery van and hustled eastward. Bonn also released Renate Lutze, 41, who had been arrested for espionage in 1976 while working as a secretary in the West German Defense Ministry.

The elaborate spy exchange apparently rid Bonn once and for all of Guillaume, who was a classic "sleeper"—an agent who is not activated until years after his infiltration. Entering

West Germany as a refugee in 1956, Guillaume got a job as a snack-bar operator in Frankfurt, where he became active in Social Democratic politics. In 1970 he joined Brandt's government, handling liaison with trade unions, and by 1973 he was in Brandt's inner circle. Off duty, Guillaume and his wife, Christel (released in a smaller prisoner exchange last March), passed a steady stream of intelligence to East Germany. Among other coups, Guillaume probably relayed a 1973 letter from President Richard Nixon dealing with friction in the Western Alliance. West German agents became suspicious of Guillaume as early as 1970, but Brandt stuck by him and felt compelled to resign in 1974 when Guillaume was exposed.

Health: Chancellor Helmut Schmidt declared that he would never agree to Guillaume's early release; nonetheless, Bonn let West German attorney Jürgen Stange negotiate the swap with Vogel. The prisoner's ill health may have helped change Schmidt's mind. Guillaume reportedly suffers from kidney dysfunction and high blood pressure. The deal may serve Schmidt's political

purposes as well. He plans to meet soon with Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev and East German party leader Erich Honecker. The prisoner exchange may improve the atmosphere for both meetings. It also improved morale in the field: undercover agents of both East and West could take comfort in the fact that their governments had bailed out a master spy who had slipped up and got caught.

STEVEN STRASSER with  
THEODORE STANGER in Bonn

Guillaume: A sleeper  
Henri Bureau—Sygma

